

Amendments to the Specification:

Please **replace the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 32**, with the following amended paragraph:

Advantageous embodiments of the plate package are defined in the dependent claims. ~~claims 15 to 26.~~ Advantageously, the heat exchanger plates may then be arranged in an alternating order in such a way that the primary part at the first end area of a first heat exchanger plate adjoins the secondary part of an adjacent second heat exchanger plate, wherein the height of the plate interspace decreases successively from in the proximity of the edge area of the primary porthole with regard to the first heat exchanger plate to in the proximity of the secondary edge zone with regard to the first heat exchanger plate. This height may decrease continuously or gradually. Furthermore, it is to be mentioned that the heat exchanger plates may be arranged in an alternating order in such a way that the primary part at the first end area of a first heat exchanger plate adjoins the secondary part of an adjacent second heat exchanger plate, wherein substantially each depression of the first heat exchanger plate abuts a projection of the adjacent second heat exchanger plate. The heat exchanger plates may advantageously be permanently joined to each other.

Please **add the following new paragraph after the paragraph ending at page 9, line 31**:

Fig. 4a discloses a cross-sectional view along the line IVa–IVa in Fig. 3.

Please **replace the paragraph beginning at page 11, line 4**, with the following amended paragraph:

Each of the first end area 16 and the second end area ~~[[12]]~~ 17 includes a distribution area 26, which extends over substantially the whole respective end area 16, 17 except for the portholes 21, 23. Each distribution area 26 has a base surface 27, which extends over

substantially the whole distribution area 26. The base surface 27 of the distribution areas 26 is inclined in relation to the central extension plane 13 and is located at an upper level in the proximity of the upper plate plane 14 in the proximity of the edge area 25 of the primary porthole 21 and sinks successively to a lower level in the proximity of the lower plate plane 15 in the proximity of the secondary edge zone 12a. The base surface 27 of the distribution areas 26 also sinks successively along a border to the central heat transfer area 18 from in the proximity of the primary edge zone 11a to in the proximity of the secondary edge zone 12a. In the embodiment disclosed, the base surface 27 of the distribution areas 26 sinks continuously from the upper level to the lower level. It is to be noted that the base surface 27 also may sink gradually between successively lower levels which are substantially parallel to the central extension plane 13.

Please add the following new paragraph after the paragraph ending at page 14, line 26:

Fig. 4a illustrates a section along line IVa-IVa in Fig. 3 and the inclination of the base surface 27 from the edge zone 12a to the edge area 25, i.e., the whole extension of the base surface 27.